

"Mother Ships" over Montana?

When Ruppelt said some reports being received were hard to credit, he may have had the next one in mind.

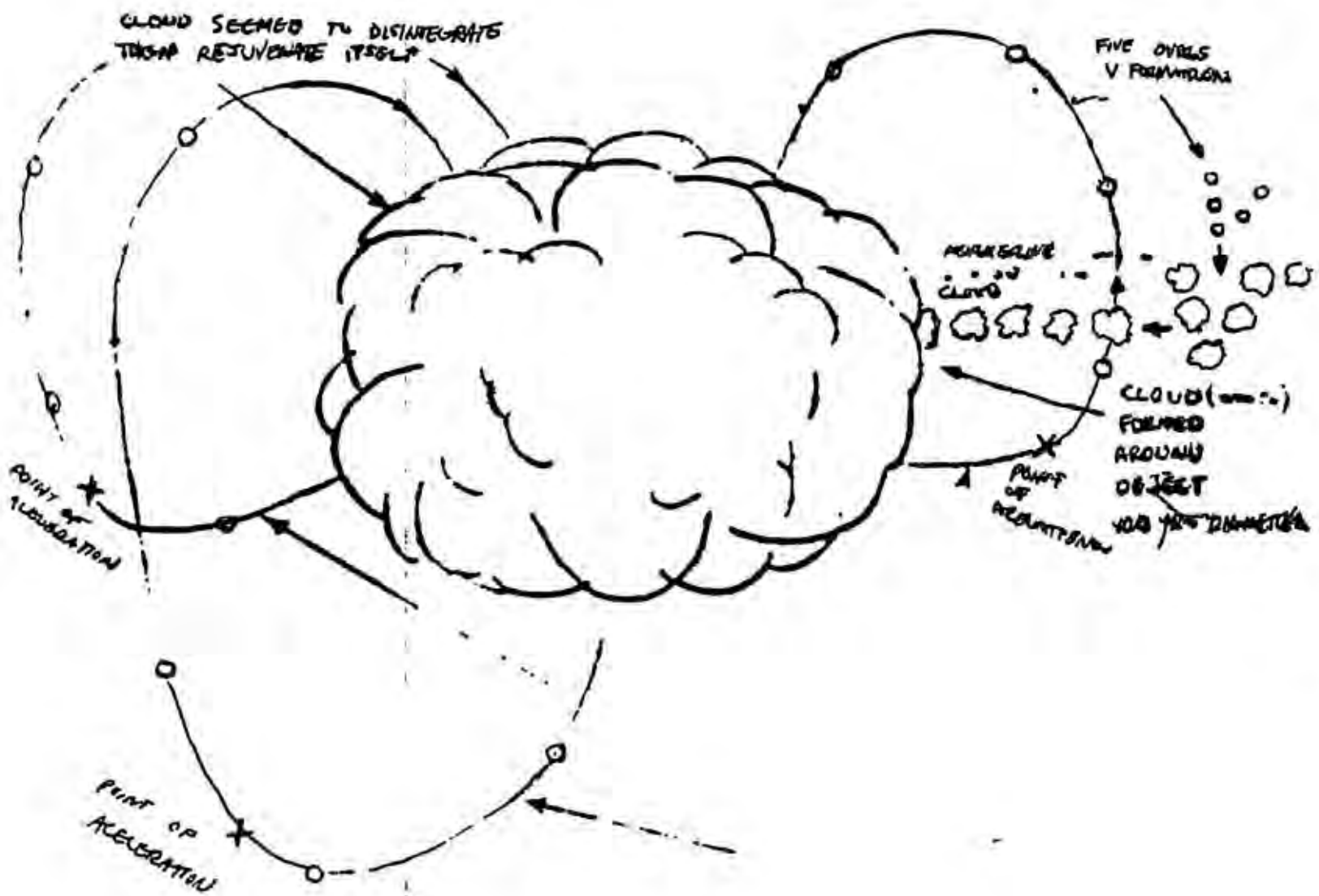
The witness was a Major in the Army; who, while stationed with the 2 Division, Sandia Base, Albuquerque, New Mexico, between 1946 and 1948, had a "Q" clearance. This clearance was one of the highest granted. Sandia at the time was engaged in a crash program to produce atomic bombs in quantity.

On the afternoon of July 29, 1952, this Major was on vacation with his family in Montana, fishing the streams. At about 2:00 p.m. MST he was driving on a highway enroute to Ennis, Montana, and was some eight miles from town when he:

"...noticed a dark colored object hovering over the mountains to the right of the highway. I slowed down and stopped the car, and as I did so the object formed a white cloud around itself. The distance was, as I would estimate it, three or four miles in a direct line and the clouds were about one thousand feet above the summit of the mountain. Shortly after that three smaller disk-like objects came bursting out of the clouds from different angles traveling at an estimated two hundred miles per hour. Each of these objects made an arc in different directions and at the peak of the arc accelerated at a terrific speed and departed to a central point behind the clouds and disappeared. There was a trail of very hazy film of dark colored smoke. I had an eight-powered binocular when I was watching this.

"I stopped two other cars, one from Arkansas and one from Ohio. The man in the car from Ohio had a pair of 50-power binoculars. We all, and I think there was about a dozen of us, watched with the naked eye and binoculars. Shortly after the three objects left the cloud five objects appeared on the right side of the cloud in a V-formation traveling slowly and then each of these in succession formed a small cloud around themselves. They changed formation from the "V" to single file and entered the big cloud one behind the other.

"During this time I took colored moving pictures with a 8mm Bell and Howell camera and still pictures, black and white, with a Kodax Retina camera. We watched this phenomena for almost 30 minutes and the whole time while we were watching them no other clouds formed in the sky in our range of vision. Upon the advice of a civilian friend the films, undeveloped, were turned over to Major(...deleted) of the 29th Air Division at Great Falls AFB, Montana.



"Mother ship" over Montana. Some details are not clear.

"Along about the end of the 30 minutes on a mountain to the left of the highway and some six miles estimated from us another cloud suddenly appeared and the same phenomenon took place with objects leaving and returning." 250.

This story really stirs the imagination, but like many cases in official files there is no record of a follow up (There seems to be plenty of people to question.) and no record of whatever happened to the films.

250. Flyobrpt. To: JED WP/ATIC Wright-Patterson, Dayton, Ohio. ATTN: CLN. From: CG 29th Air Division (Def) Great Falls AFB, Montana. 30 July 52. Air Force BLUE BOOK Files.

Returning to the United States, some 20 minutes after the Pentagon press conference ended in Washington a remarkable series of UFO sightings took place in Montana where it was 3:20 in the afternoon.

"Mother Ship" over Great Falls?

At the Transport Control Center at Great Falls AFB, Great Falls, Montana (Manned by members of the 1701st Air Traffic Squadron) a Staff Sergeant had just entered the

unit's office when he heard a very strange radio transmission come over the voice circuit of the Transport Control, Mc Chord AFB, Washington. As he looked around the room he noticed that the others in the office were as amazed as he at the words. In the room at that moment was another Sergeant, a Lieutenant, and a woman civilian clerk. Everyone agreed that the voice blaring from the loudspeaker announced: "Flying saucers sighted over Seattle, Washington, at approximately 1515 MST and were headed toward Great Falls..." 311. The transmission was then cut off as if someone had thrown a switch.

The airmen and the officer, just for a lark, conferred and estimated that the so-called "flying saucers" should be due at any moment in their vicinity so the trio of Air Force men went outside and walked over to the front of Twin Hangers near the airfield tower where they had a good view of the sky. The woman clerk locked the cash drawer in her desk and followed. The S/Sgt., to his undoubted surprise, immediately sighted: "...two stationary objects at about 1525 MST...[and then]one came from the east and went toward the first two and departed in the west in a matter of seconds. The other two followed and departed to the west..." 312.

The other Sergeant/witness relates that he:

"...looked into the south quadrant of the sky at an elevation of approximately 70 degrees and sighted three objects. One appeared to be larger than the others. The larger object was stationary with the two smaller objects circling around it counter-clock-wise. When the first object reached the western side of the stationary object it immediately darted off to the southwest behind a group of small clouds and it was lost from view. The other smaller object darted off due west and when I looked back at the larger object it had disappeared." 313.

The officer also saw the aerial objects, and he had this to add to the airmen's observations: "They were circular in shape and silver in color. They had no apparent depth as far as I could determine. One in particular looked as though it stopped, reversed itself in motion, and then disappeared at a terrific rate of speed." 314.

An Air Force Captain happened by at 3:25 p.m. and gazed at that part of the sky where the others were pointing. The objects were plainly visible and in his official statement on the matter he mentioned that the objects: "...appeared to have a flat aluminum base...[and]at times they would have a discolored color and they would seem to drift at an angle." 315.

Furthermore:

"By this time the object on the right, the direction in which I was facing [Since the objects were cavorting almost directly overhead and very close to the sun, not everyone got a good look.] -I was facing toward the east -started with a backward motion which appeared to be with tremendous speed." 316.

Convinced something very odd was occurring, the Captain asked the S/Sgt. to call the CAA to see if they had radar contact.

As the others kept watch outside, the S/Sgt. went inside the Control Center where he placed a call to the local CAA office to alert civilian authorities, and hardly had the airmen finished informing the CAA men when his listeners spotted a strange object come out of the blinding glare around the sun and cross the sky. With the objects already overhead the CAA officials were impatient to get off the phone so they told the airman to call back later. 317.

In the meantime, the objects in the sky temporarily disappeared from view so the previously mentioned Captain rushed to the Traffic Office to phone Wing Intelligence, but when he got someone on the line he was told everyone had already left to check on the same UFOs.

Back outside a 1st Lieutenant was just then reporting for duty at 3:30 p.m. and he came upon the group of "saucer watchers," now numbering 15 to 20 persons. Fascinated that so many persons were scanning the sky, he asked about the cause of all the excitement. When he was told "flying saucers," he scoffed because he could see some dandelion seeds blowing around in the air and some sheets of paper whirling in the wind. There's your so-called "flying saucers" he thought, but he nonetheless decided to take some time to be sure:

"After watching approximately five minutes I was able to see what appeared to be a disc, white or metal in color approaching from the west. As it moved directly overhead it turned generally north at a 90 degree turn then slowing down and made approximately four more 90 degree turns and then proceeded east.

"After seeing this I knew what I was looking for and was able to pick up at least five more of these objects. Being skeptical I did my best to see them as either dandelion seeds or either small particles close to the surface of the earth rather than large objects at extreme distance. However, after keeping them in my sight long enough to study their appearance they definitely seemed to be very high. I won't make an estimate of the height since I did not know their size. All of these appeared in the west and proceeded east at what appeared to be an extreme high rate of speed.

"Due to the 90 degree turns and the apparent high rate of speed I discount any possibility of them being conventional or jet type aircraft." 318.

The small knot of people included an Air Force Major at 3:45 p.m. and after carefully watching the objects he put to paper this account:

"I, Major(...deleted), at approximately 1545 MST, 29 July witnessed a circular object traversing the stratosphere, at approximately 30,000 to 40,000 feet high. The objects were silver or white in color and definitely disc shape in structure. They moved with extreme maneuverability. They appeared to travel from west to east and west to southeast at approximately 2,000 miles per hour. There was no vapor trails visible. One larger disc shaped object hovered for about 20 seconds and immediately darted off at a high rate of acceleration and disappeared to the southeast. I have heretofore been very doubtful as to any flying saucers or anything of that nature but I will swear that these were definite objects.

"At one time I saw one in a bank and saw a metallic flash. On this particular date, 29 July, the sky was cloudless, except for a few strata-cumulus formed clouds and the ground visibility was approximately 65 miles. The atmosphere was very, very clear, in other words, the sky above was so blue it offered a good contrast. I am sure of the direction of these being from the west and to the east and southeast. I saw approximately 5 of these objects." 319.

Another S/Sgt. was walking across the base on his way back to his unit when he saw people in front of the Twin Rangers pointing up. Looking up to where everyone was pointing, the S/Sgt. observed one of the strange objects:

"...toward the south and right below it a smaller object moving back and forth like a pendulum and it seemed that one side of the lower object was black and it turned one way and then disappeared and turned back and it would come into view again, indicating only one side was reflecting the sun. The object seemed to move in a straight line and stop and turn around and move back and at end of movement it would lose itself for a few seconds and start back." 320.

Back at Great Falls AFB the S/Sgt., that had alerted the CAA to the presence of strange objects in the Montana sky, received a phone call from the Great Falls Tribune at 5:35 p.m. MST, the newspaper making an inquiry about any UFO sightings made made earlier than the ones already reported. The S/Sgt. replied in the affirmative, relating the words and unexplained termination of the queer message heard over the Traffic Center's swank box, a message that mentioned flying saucers

over Seattle. He had no more to tell the paper but it still would not be the last inquiry. 325.



"Security leak?"

At 10:30 p.m. MST the S/Sgt. in Great Falls, Montana, got another phone call about the UFO incident that day (What more was there to tell?!) and to the airman's surprise the call was long distance from Mc Chord AFB, Washington, concerning the "queer saucer alert" heard over the swank box. An Air Force Captain did the talking, while a Colonel, whom the S/Sgt. understood was the base CO, listened in on the conversation. The Captain asked about the source of the queer message, which prompted the S/Sgt. to repeat his story about the "alert" being "announced" over the Mc Chord channel. That incurred a heated denial by the Captain that such a transmission was ever sent. In his defense, the S/Sgt. began to list the people who had also heard the message and were ready to verify his version of events. The Captain cooled off and mumbled something about a "security leak." Concerned when he heard the word "security" the S/Sgt. expressed a hope he would not be disciplined which drew from the Captain assurances that he hardly thought that would happen (The reader should note that this story is not from some sensational civilian source. It is straight out of official Air Force records!)

The S/Sgt. received still another phone call that night, at 11:45 p.m., when a representative of the Associated Press based in Great Falls rang him up to get details the newsservice might have missed, also saying that Air Force authorities in Seattle were pressing AP for information on the source of a news account about the "saucer alert." For the last time the S/Sgt. told his story. 332. Did the Air Force have a secret "UFO alert" network?????

"This man was not kidding."

311. Flyobrpt. To: Intelligence Officer, ONTID, MATS, Kelly AFB, San Antonio, Texas. From: CO 1701 AF WG, Great Falls, Montana. 4 August 52. "Statement of witnesses: S/Sgt (...deleted) 1701st Air Traffic Squadron. Air Force BLUE BOOK Files.

312. Ibid.

313. Ibid. "Statement: M/Sgt (...deleted)."

314. Ibid. "Statement: 1st Lt. (...deleted)."

315. Ibid. "Statement: Capt. (...deleted)."

316. Ibid.

317. Ibid.

318. Ibid. "Statement: 1st Lt. (...deleted)."

319. Ibid. "Statement: Major (...deleted)."

320. Ibid. "Statement: S/Sgt. (...deleted)."

325. Flyobrpt. To: Intelligence Officer, ONTID, MATS, Kelly AFB, San Antonio, Texas. From: CO 1701 AF WG, Great Falls, Montana. "Statement: S/Sgt. (...deleted)." Air Force BLUE BOOK Files.

332. Flyobrpt. To: Intelligence Officer, ONTID, MATS, Kelly AFB, San Antonio, Texas. From: CO 1701 AF WG, Great Falls, Montana. "Statement: S/Sgt. (...deleted)." 4 August 52. Air Force BLUE BOOK Files.